

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 06914 291507Z

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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SUBJ: ISRAELI MEDIA ON ALLON VISIT AND ARAB-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS

REF: TEL AVIV 6555

1. JERUSALEM POST NOV 28 FRONTPAGES ARTICLE BY DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT DAVID LANDAU, STATING THERE IS CONCERN IN JERUSALEM THAT USG MIGHT URGE ISRAEL DURING UPCOMING ALLON VISIT TO CONCLUDE SIMULTANEOUS SECOND-STAGE SETTLEMENTS WITH BOTH EGYPT AND SYRIA. CITING REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON, LANDAU SAYS SECRETARY IS NO LONGER CERTAIN AFTER RABAT THAT EGYPT CAN BE PERSUADED TO CONCLUDE SEPARATE AGREEMENT IN NEXT STAGE.

2. LANDAU REPORTS THAT "A HIGHLY PLACED (ISRAELI) SOURCE" BELIEVES FURTHER WITHDRAWAL ON GOLAN IN CONTEXT OF SETTLEMENT "FAR REMOVED FROM PEACE" IS "ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE FOR ISRAEL TO CONTEMPLATE." ACCORDING SOURCE, WITHDRAWAL OF
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 06914 291507Z

"ONLY" 4-5 KM BEING DISCUSSED IN WASHINGTON WOULD NEVERTHELESS

THREATEN MILITARY CONTROL OF ENTIRE GOLAN AREA. SOURCE REPORTEDLY STRESSED THAT ON KUNEITRA-BNOT YAACOV AXIS IN PARTICULAR SUCH WITHDRAWAL WOULD INVOLVE EVACUATING HILLS OVERLOOKING KUNEITRA, THUS ABANDONING "MOST VITAL NATURAL OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF A SYRIAN ADVANCE TOWARDS GALILEE AND HULEH VALLEY."

3. LANDAU POINTS OUT THAT ISRAELI LEADERS HAVE PRIVATELY INDICATED THAT PRESENT DISENGAGEMENT LINE IS NOT NECESSARILY GOI "LAST WORD" ON GOLAN. FURTHER WITHDRAWALS ARE DEEMED POSSIBLE, EVEN IF THEY INVOLVE SHIFTING ONE OR TWO SETTLEMENTS, BUT ONLY IF ISRAEL RECEIVES IN RETURN SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL CONCESSIONS TOWARD PEACE.

4. LANDAU ARTICLE CONCLUDES THAT SINCE SYRIA HAS SHOWN NO SIGN OF CONSIDERING WHAT GOI REGARDS AS NECESSARY POLITICAL COUNTERPROPOSALS, PRESENT VIEW HERE IS THAT INTERIM ACCORD WITH SYRIA IS VIRTUALLY UNATTAINABLE. IT IS CONCEDED THAT THIS WOULD PREJUDICE FURTHER PROGRESS WITH EGYPT, BUT POINT IS MADE THAT SUCH PROSPECTS ARE NOT BRIGHT IN ANY CASE BECAUSE OF DISPARITY OF VIEWS BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL ON NATURE OF AGREEMENT. (IN THIS CONNECTION, LANDAU ARGUES THAT POLITICAL QUID PRO QUO IS AS IMPORTANT IN SINAI AS ON GOLAN SINCE FURTHER SUBSTANTIAL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL IN SINAI WOULD PLACE EAST BANK OF CANAL BEYOND RANGE OF IDF ARTILLERY, THUS ALLOWING EGYPT TO MASS FORCES EAST OF CANAL SHOULD TENSIONS RISE IN FUTURE.)

5. NOV 29 HAARETZ (MARGALIT FROM WASHINGTON) ALSO DISCUSSES ALLON VISIT IN CONTEXT OF NEGOTIATIONS, SPECULATING THAT ALLON WILL BE SUBJECTED TO TWO US REQUESTS: (A) THAT ISRAEL BACK OFF FROM HER DEMAND FOR POLITICAL CONCESSIONS IN NEXT STAGE WITH EGYPT AND (B) THAT ISRAEL PRESENT IDEAS ON OPENING NEGOTIATIONS WITH SYRIA AS WELL. ARTICLE ADDS PARENTHETICALLY THAT SECRETARY HAS ASSURED DINITZ THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN SOURCE OF STORIES RE POSSIBLE US PROPOSAL FOR FURTHER 4-5 KM WITHDRAWAL IN GOLAN.

6. COMMENT: LANDAU AND MARGALIT STORIES ARE BEGINNING OF NORMAL SPATE OF "WHAT WILL HAPPEN" ARTICLES IN ADVANCE OF ALLON VISIT. OUR EXPERIENCE IS THAT WHILE SUCH STORIES VARY WIDELY IN ACCURACY, THEY SERVE PURPOSE OF PREPARING PUBLIC OPINION FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 TEL AV 06914 291507Z

EVENTUAL RESULTS OF HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE NOTE THAT CONCEPT OF FURTHER 4-5 KM WITHDRAWAL ON GOLAN WAS FIRST BROACHED IN DAVAR (BARNEA) OVER TWO WEEKS AGO (PARA 5 REFTEL). MARGALIT PIECE IS FIRST WE HAVE SEEN THAT RAISES PROSPECT OF ISRAEL BEING ASKED TO FOREGO POLITICAL QUID PRO QUO IN NEXT STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPTIANS.
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